Relationship to other Elements, Plans, and Programs

General Plan policies related to air quality are designed to help ensure that regional and local air quality is as healthful as possible. This Element contains specific air quality policies; however, all Elements of the General Plan must work together to form a cohesive set of goals and policies that can help produce clean air for generations to come.

Ultimately, these goals and policies are intended to improve quality of life throughout the county and to support the General Plan's goals by improving public health, boosting the local economy, and reducing damage to trees, crops, plants, lakes, animals, buildings, and historical structures and monuments from air pollutants.

The County's Guiding Principles for Strategic Growth address the interconnection of land use, resource conservation, and quality of life. The Land Use Element's Framework for Planning (Inland and Coastal) reflects the County's Strategic Growth principles and goals. The following air quality goals, policies, and implementation strategies are compatible and consistent with the Strategic Growth principles and provide specific direction to achieve and maintain the County's desired air quality.

Other chapters of this Element, notably the Energy chapter, also include goals, policies, and implementation strategies that will directly and indirectly improve and protect air quality.

Major Issues

The current and projected air quality challenges for San Luis Obispo County can be categorized into six key issues. While the County cannot solve all of them, outlining the problems that need to be solved allows the County to contribute its share to improve regional air quality for current and future generations.

LOCAL AIR QUALITY

1) Historical land use decisions now contribute to poorer air quality. The land use patterns and transportation system

multiply the resources available to accomplish air quality goals that often impact neighboring cities and counties.

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

6) Global climate change threatens the county's air quality and quality of life. Atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide (CO^2) are increasing, primarily from the burning of fossil fuels and land use change. This has led to an unprecedented rate of global climate change that could have profound implications for San Luis Obispo County. It could also complicate regional attempts to achieve ozone ambient air quality standards, since warmer temperatures lead to increased formation of ozone. Policies are needed that reduce greenhouse gas emissions while also preparing the county to adapt to a changing climate.

Goals, Policies, and Implementation Strategies

The following section relates each of the six major issues mentioned above to specific air quality goals, policies, and implementation strategies.

The intent of the following goals, policies, and implementation strategies is to improve local and regional air quality and help reduce global climate change. This will improve public health; boost the local economy; and reduce pollution damage to trees, crops, plants, lakes, animals, and buildings.

TABLE AQ-1
AIR QUALITY GOALS

Goal AQ 1	Per capita vehicle-miles-traveled countywide will be substantially reduced consistent with statewide targets.
Goal AQ 2	The County will be a leader in implementing air quality programs and innovations.
Goal AQ 3	State and federal ambient air quality standards will, at a minimum, be attained and maintained.
Goal AQ 4	Greenhouse gas emissions from County operations and communitywide sources will be reduced from baseline levels by a minimum of 15% by 2020.
Goal AQ 5	The County will adapt to adverse climate change.

GOAL 1 PER CAPITA VEHICLE- MILES-TRAVELED COUNTYWIDE WILL BE SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED CONSISTENT WITH STATEWIDE TARGETS.

Policy AQ 1.1 Compact development

Encourage compact land development by concentrating new growth within existing communities and ensuring complete services to meet local needs.

↓ ***Implementation Strategy AQ 1.1.1 Strategic Growth Principles***

Implement Strategic Growth principles and, as needed, amend applicable ordinances and policies to:

a. Locate new community commercial centers near major activity nodes and transportation corridors. Community commercial centers should provide goods and services that residents have historically had to travel outside of the community to obtain.

b. Promote new commercial development and needed services and facilities in rural communities that provides for the immediate needs of the local residents.

c. Direct most new residential development away from rural areas and concentrate it in higher density residential areas located near major transportation corridors and transit routes, where resources and services are available.

d. Design new commercial development to encourage and facilitate pedestrian circulation within and between commercial sites and nearby residential areas rather than being designed solely to serve vehicular circulation.

e. Promote use of first floor space in commercial centers for retail, food service, financial institutions, and other high-volume commercial uses. Allow and encourage residential uses in the upper floors of commercial buildings.

Vehicle Miles Traveled *(VMT) are the number of miles traveled by a given vehicle in a specified period. This number is sometimes estimated for the entire fleet of on road vehicles. (SLO APCD, CAP)*

e. Incorporate **design** features **and** infrastructure **into new** projects **that enable access by transit, bicycling, and** walking.

f. Establish **minimum residential** densities **on** appropriate **sites in urban areas where resources are** available.

g. **Rezone land to Residential** Multi-Family **(RMF) in existing urban areas where resources and services are available and expanded.**

h. **Reduce parking requirements in areas such as central business districts where a variety of** uses **and services are** planned **in close** proximity **to each** other and **to transit. Work with communities and** developers **to** fund additional parking **where needed, for example,** through **in-lieu** parking **fee programs.**

↓ ***Implementation Strategy AQ 1.2.2 Decoupling of parking from housing and commercial development***
Explore decoupling (or unbundling) of required parking ~~and~~ from housing **and** commercial development **in order** to ~~allocate~~ identify **the true cost of** parking ~~directly to users~~ and to more accurately assign the costs of parking to those who use the spaces.

Policy AQ 1.3 Convenient alternative transportation
Require **new** development **to provide** safe and convenient **access to** alternative transportation **within** the project area **and** safe access to public transportation **as** feasible.

↓ ***Implementation Strategy AQ 1.3.1 Connectivity in new development***
Require **new development to construct** paths that connect land uses and other **non**-motorized routes, **safe road crossings at** major intersections **and** secure, **weatherproof** bicycle parking and storage **facilities, and** long-term maintenance **of such** facilities.

Policy AQ 1.4 Alternative transportation improvements
Where new development is required to provide necessary alternative transportation improvements, such improvements

Transportation represents 41 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions in California.

—The State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission

(i.e. railyards, downtown centers, gasoline development facilities, chrome platers, dry cleaners, and refineries).

↓ ***Implementation Strategy AQ 3.6.1 Identify health risks to sensitive receptors***
Provide an analysis of potential health risks and identify mitigation measures to reduce risk to acceptable levels for projects involving sensitive receptors proposed within 500 feet of freeways and high-speed highways, consistent with APCD criteria.

Policy AQ 3.7 Reduce vehicle idling
Encourage the reduction of heavy-vehicle idling throughout the county, particularly near schools, hospitals, senior care facilities, and areas prone to concentrations of people, including residential areas.

↓ ***Implementation Strategy AQ 3.7.1 Heavy Duty Vehicle Idling***
Encourage the reduction of heavy-duty vehicle idling throughout the county using APCD and California Air Resources Board idling reduction policies for schools and other sensitive receptors.

Policy AQ 3.8 Reduce dust emissions
Reduce PM10 and PM2.5 emissions from unpaved and paved County roads to the maximum extent feasible.

↓ ***Implementation Strategy AQ 3.8.1 Reduce PM emissions from County roads***
1) Implement all APCD particulate matter (PM) emission controls.

2) Continue efforts to clean paved roads, and

3) Pave or "chip seal" public County dirt roads to minimize fugitive dust.